

this Republican budget an innovative new effort to empower education and schooling with new dynamic programs responsive to the current needs of our constituents. School systems and educators should not be forced to choose which students receive the aid they require and which must go without that assistance. All students must have the opportunity to succeed, and it is the responsibility of Congress to join with localities and States to ensure that each student receives a quality education. The budget package proposed by the Republican majority in Congress falls very short of the investment needed to ensure that our students are receiving the help they require to succeed and prosper today and tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WOOLSEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

DISAPPEARANCE OF CHERYL ANN BARNES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida [Mrs. THURMAN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity today to talk about something that happened earlier this month in Sumter County, FL, which is in my district.

On January 3, Cheryl Ann Barnes, a 17-year-old high school senior, disappeared. Cheryl is a white female, 5-foot-4-inches tall, and has brown hair and brown eyes. At the time of her disappearance, Cheryl was driving to school in her 1988, metallic grey Mazda 626. The license plate number is RQP74X.

Mr. Speaker, I took this time today to talk about Cheryl's disappearance for a number of reasons. First, despite the continuing efforts of law enforcement and the Sumter County community, 21 days have passed since Cheryl was last seen driving to school. I am hoping that someone watching on C-SPAN today may have seen Cheryl's car somewhere recently and will contact me or the Sumter County Sheriff's Department.

Second, the problem of missing children is a national issue. Just recently, President Clinton issued an Executive order making it easier for pictures of missing children to be posted in Federal buildings.

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Getting information out regarding Cheryl's disappearance has not been a problem. In fact, the Barnes family and the Sumter County sheriff's department say they have been very gratified by the level of cooperation that they have received from all missing children's organizations. And yet 21 days have come and gone without any word about Cheryl's whereabouts.

I cannot imagine the agony Cheryl's grandparents, William and Shirley Barnes, are continuing to experience daily or her older sister Sheila Burgess or many of her friends. Cheryl is one of those students who is a friend to everyone. She is a devoutly religious young woman who is very active in school and community activities. They think it would be totally out of character, according to those who know Cheryl, for her to have run away or left voluntarily. That is just not a possibility. In fact, the last time Cheryl was seen, she had made one stop about four blocks away from her high school; then she disappeared.

Again, I am asking that if anyone has seen someone resembling Cheryl, 5 feet, 4 inches tall and about 120 pounds with brown hair and brown eyes, to please call me or the Sumter County sheriff's department at 904-793-0222. I know that the Barnes family has still a lot of hope that Cheryl will one day return. I hope someone listening today can help make that happen.

I also know that the Barnes family would like me to let people know within the Sumter County area how much they have appreciated the support that they have received, the countless hours that they have spent in their searches, and certainly all of law enforcement's help in trying to get this done.

If anybody might have or is asking or needs any kind of information or a picture or anything, please do not hesitate to either call me or, as I said, the Sumter County sheriff's department at 904-793-0222 and we will be glad to get this information. Any businesses that would like to have these pictures, remembering this is a nationwide search, this is not just in the State of Florida, any help that any of you can give us, we would appreciate it.

I thank the Speaker for letting me have this opportunity to get out this information that is extremely important to this Nation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS DELEGATE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HUTCHINSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced the Northern Marianas Delegate Act, to provide for a nonvoting Delegate to the House of Representatives to represent the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands became the newest territory of the United States and an American commonwealth in 1976. This commonwealth is comprised of the northern islands in the Mariana Island chain, the principal islands being Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Guam is also a part of the Mariana Island chain, and it is fitting that the people of Guam have the honor today to share in the

introduction of this bill for our Pacific neighbors, and for our brothers and sisters of Chamorro heritage in the Northern Marianas who share Guam's indigenous identity.

It is important that the Northern Marianas be accorded representation in Congress, not just for fair and just representation of an American community whose interests are affected by the actions of Congress, but more importantly for what the people of Northern Marianas can contribute to the Nation through their Delegate.

The American relationship with the Northern Marianas began just over 50 years ago when American forces fought on the beaches of Saipan and Tinian, and at great human cost, expelled a colonial power that had acquired these islands as part of a Pacific empire. The Americans, in the years to come, established the seeds of democracy that have resulted in this new American commonwealth. This commonwealth, whose roots to America are traced to a violent military encounter in World War II, is the first American soil acquired by conquest in this century. That the people of the Northern Marianas have freely chosen to become a part of the American family is a great credit to the United States; that they do not enjoy any participation in the national political process as citizens discredits our commitment to democratic principles.

Today the American citizens who live in the Northern Marianas contribute to the Nation and participate in the life of our Nation in all the same ways that every other American citizen does in his own community. They pay taxes, serve in the military, and work hard for the progress of their communities. They are part of the fabric of our great Nation.

Participation in this American democracy is not based on a particular citizen's tax contribution to the Treasury and it is not based on a preordained size of a community. It is based on a community's commitment to our democratic form of government and our Nation. Our American citizenship has as its foundation a promise of fair and equal treatment by our Government and that promise extends to Congress where fair and equal treatment demands that the Northern Marianas be represented by a Delegate.

The bill that I introduced today mirrors the legislation which granted Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands representation in 1972 and the legislation which granted American Samoa representation in 1980. The Northern Marianas will join the ranks of Delegates representing these islands, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, and the Northern Marianas will add its voice to those who represent American citizens who do not reside in the 50 States, but who do reside in a diverse group of American communities on American soil.

In introducing this bill today I commend the work of the resident Representative of the Commonwealth of